

# FEMA Awards Pinellas Park \$1.36 Million for Emergency Generator and Wind Protection

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**ORLANDO, Fla.** – FEMA has approved a grant of **\$1,362,920** for the City of Pinellas Park to provide emergency backup power for the Barbara S. Ponce Public Library and protection from wind at 16 of its public facilities during future storms.

Funding from FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) was approved in response to a proposal by the city after Hurricane Irma in 2017. The grant will help pay for the installation of an emergency generator at the Barbara S. Ponce Public Library to ensure continuity of operations for post-disaster recovery. The installation of shutters and impact-resistant windows at all 16 facilities will provide wind protection for all openings such as vents and exhaust fans. The roof and exterior walls of the buildings will also be strengthened.

The HMGP is an important source of federal disaster assistance. Program funding may become available after the president declares a major disaster, with a goal of strengthening communities by improving buildings and critical infrastructure. A 2018 report by the National Institute of Building Sciences found that one dollar spent on hazard mitigation saves more than six dollars of recovery and rebuilding costs.

Generally, the HMGP may provide a state, tribe or territory with additional grants up to 15 percent of the total disaster grants awarded by FEMA for a federally declared disaster. States such as Florida that meet advanced mitigation planning criteria may qualify for a higher percentage.

Florida has a FEMA-approved Enhanced Mitigation Plan, making the state eligible for HMGP funding not to exceed 20 percent of the estimated total amount of grant money spent by FEMA in the Hurricane Irma disaster. From this amount, the HMGP reimburses the state up to 75 percent of eligible costs for hazard mitigation projects. The remaining amount comes from other sources such as state and local assets and a combination of cash and in-kind sources.



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